

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 101527
ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
PA/PRESS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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O 210028Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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PAGE 02 STATE 101527

AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000

NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR
DOD
USICA

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT:DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - APRIL 20, 1978

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR APRIL 20. FYI ONLY,
OFFICER PRESENT FOR THE DAY WAS TOM RESTON.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON THE AMERICAN, EDMUND
HALL, THAT WAS EVICTED FROM ISRAEL?

A. FIRST, LET ME SAY HE WAS NOT EVICTED FROM ISRAEL.
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PAGE 03 STATE 101527

WE HAVE THIS INFORMATION FROM OUR EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV.
VICE CONSUL EDMUND HULL, ASSIGNED TO THE CONSULATE GENERAL
IN JERUSALEM, VISITED THE MILITARILY CONTROLLED SETTLEMENT
AT HARIS, IN THE WEST BANK, ON APRIL 13TH. HE MADE NO
EFFORT TO CONCEAL HIS IDENTITY, BUT SOME MISUNDERSTANDING
ABOUT THAT SEEMS TO HAVE OCCURRED. HOWEVER, ONCE HE SHOWED
HIS IDENTITY CARD TO THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES PERSONNEL,
HE WAS PERMITTED TO DEPART WITHOUT INCIDENT.

WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS MISUNDERSTANDING WITH THE ISRAELI
AUTHORITIES. THEY HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY CONSIDER THE
MATTER CLOSED. I MIGHT SAY THAT THE WEST BANK IS INCLUDED

IN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL AT
JERUSALEM, AND IT IS NORMAL FOR CONSULAR OFFICIALS FROM
JERUSALEM TO TRAVEL THROUGHOUT THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT.

Q. HAS IT BEEN KNOWN WHAT WAS HE DOING IN THE SETTLEMENT?

A. I THINK HE WAS THERE ON A NORMAL VISIT. IT'S A PER-
FECTLY NORMAL PROVISION, A PERFECTLY NORMAL OPERATION.
LET ME SAY ON BACKGROUND, WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT THE
ISRAELIS HAVE ANY PROBLEM WITH OUR CONSULAR OFFICIALS
VISITING ANY SETTLEMENT. END BACKGROUND.

Q. WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM WITH THIS ONE?

A. I THINK THERE WAS A MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT HIS IDENTITY, AND ONCE HE PRODUCED HIS CARD -- DIPLOMATS WHEN THEY ARE ABROAD CARRY IDENTITY CARDS -- THEN HE WAS PERMITTED TO LEAVE.

Q. WELL, YOU MEAN HE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO LEAVE IF HE HAD NOT PRODUCED THE CARD?

A. I THINK ONCE THEY RECOGNIZED THAT HE WAS A FOREIGN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 04 STATE 101527

DIPLOMAT, THEY PERMITTED HIM TO LEAVE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF THEY HAD NOT KNOWN THAT HE WAS A DIPLOMAT.

Q. DID HE SHOW HIS CARD AS HE ENTERED?

A. NO, I DON'T THINK SO. HE WAS DRIVING A CAR WITH DIPLOMATIC LICENSE TAGS ON IT, BUT I DON'T THINK HE SHOWED HIS CARD AS HE ENTERED THE SETTLEMENT.

Q. WHAT WAS HE DOING THAT CAUSED THIS WHOLE THING TO BECOME AN ISSUE AT ALL?

A. I'M NOT SURE THAT HE WAS DOING ANYTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY. I DON'T KNOW THE EXACT NATURE OF HIS ACTIVITIES.

Q. WAS HE THERE ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS? WAS THERE AN OFFICIAL PURPOSE TO THIS VISIT? WAS HE INTERVIEWING SOMEBODY? WAS HE CHECKING ON CONSTRUCTION OF THE SETTLEMENT?

A. LET ME TAKE THAT QUESTION, AND I'LL FIND OUT WHAT THE PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT WAS.

Q. IS VISITATION OR ACCESS TO SUCH SETTLEMENTS NORMALLY RESTRICTED, JUST ANYONE CAN'T WALK IN?

A. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE POLICY IS BEYOND SAYING WHAT I SAID A MOMENT AGO ON BACKGROUND THAT WE HAVE NO INDICATION FROM THE ISRAELIS THAT THEY HAVE ANY PROBLEM WITH ANY OF OUR CONSULAR OFFICIALS VISITING ANY SETTLEMENT. END BACKGROUND.

Q. I UNDERSTAND THAT. I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT CONSULAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 05 STATE 101527

OFFICIALS. I'M TALKING ABOUT ORDINARY PEOPLE.

A. I DON'T KNOW. I THINK YOU SHOULD ASK THE ISRAELIS
WHAT THEIR POLICY IS.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF AMERICAN DIPLOMATS HAVE TO NOTIFY
THEY FOREIGN MINISTRY BEFORE THEY GO INTO THAT AREA, INTO
THE WEST BANK?

A. NO, I DON'T KNOW THAT.

Q. HOW DID THE MISUNDERSTANDING MANIFEST ITSELF?

A. WELL, I THINK THAT THERE WAS A BRIEF PERIOD OF TIME
WHEN THEY DID NOT KNOW WHO HE WAS AND THEN HE PRODUCED
THE CARD AND THAT RESOLVED THE MATTER. MAYBE HE SHOULD
HAVE PRODUCED HIS CARD A LITTLE BIT EARLIER, I DON'T
KNOW.

Q. HOW WAS HE APPREHENDED? WAS IT ISRAELI SOLDIERS?
WERE THEY ARMED?

A. IT WAS ISRAELI SOLDIERS, YES. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER
THEY WERE ARMED.

Q. HOW LONG WAS THE PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN THE TIME HE
WAS APPREHENDED AND THE TIME HE SHOWED HIS CARD? DID THEY
GRAB HIM AND HE SHOWED THEM HIS CARD, OR WAS HE HELD FOR
ANY LENGTH OF TIME?

A. I DON'T KNOW THE LENGTH OF TIME.

Q. YOU SAY IT WAS A BRIEF LENGTH OF TIME.

A. YES, IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING IT WAS BRIEF.

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PAGE 06 STATE 101527

Q. WAS HE APPREHENDED, IN FACT?

A. I WOULD NOT USE THE WORD APPREHENDED. HE WAS AN
AMERICAN DIPLOMAT. HE WAS NOT DOING ANYTHING WHICH WAS IN

VIOLATION OF THE LAW WHICH WOULD CAUSE YOU TO USE THE WORD
APPREHEND.

Q. HAD HE FINISHED WHATEVER BUSINESS HE WAS ON AT THIS
POINT, OR WHEN HE WAS HE WAS ALLOWED TO LEAVE, WAS HE
IN FACT BEING THROWN OUT?

A. I JUST DON'T KNOW WHETHER HE FINISHED HIS BUSINESS.

Q. CONSIDERING THAT THE ISRAELI PRESS HAS RAISED THE QUESTION THAT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN A FUMBLING SPYING ACTIVITY -- AND I QUOTE MA'ARIV -- CAN YOU FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT THIS GUY WAS DOING, AND DOES HE HAVE ANY CONNECTION WITH THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY?

A. NO. LISTEN, I'M GOING TO STICK WITH THIS GUIDANCE HERE. BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS TAKES A FAR LESS EMOTIONAL VIEW OF THIS WHOLE THING, AND IN FACT THEY TOLD US THE INCIDENT IS CLOSED.

Q. WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO TAKE PART IN SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY ON THE WEST BANK?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU ON THAT.

Q. HAS IT BEEN MADE KNOWN TO YOU WHOM HE CONTACTED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 07 STATE 101527

THAT SETTLEMENT?

A. NO.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US IF FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN'S VISIT HAS NOW BEEN OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED AND SCHEDULED?

A. YES. MR. DAYAN WILL BE COMING HERE TOWARD THE END OF NEXT WEEK, BUT THE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING STILL WORKED OUT. AS I INDICATED, OR TRIED TENTATIVELY TO INDICATE YESTERDAY, AMBASSADOR ATHERTON WILL RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES TO BE PRESENT FOR THIS VISIT. BUT THE TENTATIVE DATES FOR THE VISIT OF MR. DAYAN ARE TOWARD THE END OF NEXT WEEK.

Q. HOW LONG WILL HE STAY IN THE UNITED STATES?

A. I DON'T THINK IT WILL BE TOO LONG. A COUPLE OF DAYS, I THINK.

I THINK.

Q. AN ISRAELI NEWSPAPER REPORTED ON MONDAY THAT PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN HAVE DECIDED TO REJECT THE AMERICAN PROPOSAL TO REESTABLISH ATHERTON'S MEDIATION. CAN YOU TELL US WHETHER THAT IS ACCURATE AND THAT THEY SO TOLD THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR IN JERUSALEM OR IN TEL AVIV, WHEREVER?

A. I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING WHATSOEVER TO THE

STORY. THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL HAS INFORMED US THAT IT WOULD WELCOME A TRIP BY AMBASSADOR ATHERTON DURING HIS CURRENT TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST; BUT BECAUSE OF THIS DEVELOPMENT THAT MR. DAYAN IS COMING TO WASHINGTON, IT OBVIOUSLY MAKES SENSE FOR AMBASSADOR ATHERTON TO COME BACK HERE TO PARTICIPATE IN THOSE MEETINGS.

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PAGE 08 STATE 101527

THE QUESTION IS NOT WHERE THE MEETING IS GOING TO BE. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT AMBASSADOR ATHERTON IS GOING TO BE VERY CRUCIALLY INVOLVED IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS FROM OUR POINT.

Q. TOM, HOW LONG IS HE GOING TO BE IN CAIRO AND IS HE GOING ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST? HE'S NOT GOING TO ISRAEL?

A. NO, I DON'T THINK HE'S GOING ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE GETS TO CAIRO ON FRIDAY AND IF HE'S GOING TO BE BACK HERE TOWARD THE END OF NEXT WEEK, WHAT DOES THAT GIVE HIM -- THREE DAYS OR SO IN CAIRO?

Q. ANY WORD YET ON WHETHER PRIME MINISTER BEGIN WILL BE MEETING PRESIDENT CARTER DURING BEGIN'S VISIT HERE?

A. NO. I'M RIGHT WHERE I WAS THE OTHER DAY. HE'S ALWAYS A WELCOME GUEST HERE. I COULDN'T RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE WOULD MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER OR WITH SECRETARY VANCE, BUT THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR SUCH A MEETING. YOU MIGHT ASK THE WHITE HOUSE.

Q. ON ANOTHER SOMEWHAT LOOSELY RELATED MATTER, AN AMERICAN CITIZEN NAMED TERRY FLEENER, WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED BY AN ISRAELI COURT OF SPYING, IN EFFECT -- ACCORDING TO TODAY'S PAPERS, THE SUPREME COURT OF ISRAEL HAS REFUSED TO REDUCE HER SENTENCE. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THIS CASE, NOW THAT THE ISRAELI COURTS EVIDENTLY ARE FINISHED WITH IT?

A. MISS FLEENER'S APPEAL FOR A REDUCTION IN SENTENCE WAS TURNED DOWN BY THE COURT ON APRIL 19 BECAUSE THE COURT

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PAGE 09 STATE 101527

SAID SHE KNOWINGLY COMMITTED AN OFFENSE THAT CARRIES A FIVE-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE. A CONSULAR OFFICER HAS BEEN PRESENT AT THE COURT HEARINGS, AND WE CONTINUE TO VISIT MISS FLEENER IN PRISON ON A FREQUENT BASIS. BUT THE DEPARTMENT HAS NO COMMENT ABOUT THE JUDICIAL DECISION WHICH YOU POINT TO.

Q. WHAT ABOUT ESMail?

A. CROSS-EXAMINATION BY THE PROSECUTOR WAS COMPLETED ON APRIL 17. THE COURT ORDERED THE PROSECUTION TO PRESENT ITS WRITTEN SUMMATION WITHIN 15 DAYS AND THE DEFENSE TO SUBMIT ITS WRITTEN SUMMATION WITHIN 15 DAYS THEREAFTER. THE COURT ANNOUNCED THAT ITS DECISION WOULD BE RENDERED ON JUNE 7.

THE REPORT FROM OUR EMBASSY DID NOT INDICATE WHY THE COURT DECISION WOULD NOT BE HANDED DOWN BEFORE JUNE 7, BUT WE NOTE THE WIRE SERVICE REPORT WHICH SAYS THAT THE PRESIDING JUDGE WILL BE ABSENT FROM ISRAEL FOR NEARLY A MONTH AND THERE WAS AN INSUFFICIENT TIME TO COMPLETE THE CASE BEFORE HE LEAVES.

Q. DID YOU EVER POST AN ANSWER ON WHETHER HE WAS MISTREATED? I KNOW THE ISRAELI'S REPLIED TO YOU AND THERE WAS NEVER ANY CLEAR ANSWER HERE WHETHER YOU ACCEPTED THAT REPLY AS DEFINITIVE.

A. ESMail COMPLAINED OF MISTREATMENT IN THE INITIAL PHASES OF HIS IMPRISONMENT, BUT HE HAS NOT COMPLAINED OF SUCH MISTREATMENT SINCE THAT TIME.

AS I SAID, OUR CONSULAR OFFICIALS ARE REGULARLY IN TOUCH WITH HIM AND HIS LAWYER AND THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES ABOUT THE CASE.

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PAGE 10 STATE 101527

NOW, I THINK WE DID POST AN ANSWER SOMETIME BACK WHEN THAT STORY WAS IN THE PRESS AS TO WHAT OUR JUDGMENT WAS AFTER HAVING TALKED TO HIM, AND I BELIEVE, TO HIS BROTHER AND TO THE ISRAELIS.

Q. ARE THERE ANY OTHER AMERICANS IN ISRAELI JAILS?

A. I HAVE NO IDEA.

Q. I GATHER THE REPORTS THAT HE STOPPED IN LIBYA BEFORE HE WENT TO ISRAEL, THAT HE TOOK SOME TERRORIST TRAINING, AND THAT OUR INTELLIGENCE AUTHORITIES KNEW THIS BEFORE HE WENT TO ISRAEL. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT AGREE WITH THIS REPORT OR NOT?

A. THE STATE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT COMMENT ON ALLEGATIONS OF INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

Q. COULD YOU FIND OUT HOW MANY AMERICANS ARE IN ISRAELI

JAILS ON SIMILAR ACTION?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY OTHER AMERICANS BEING HELD BY THE ISRAELIS ON CHARGES OF TERRORISM OR SUBVERSION.

Q. HOW ABOUT SPYING?

A. AL OF THAT TOGETHER.

2. THE FOLLOWING ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN AT THE NOON BRIEFING ON APRIL 19 WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT ON APRIL 20:

Q. SINCE DAYAN HAS SAID THAT ISRAEL WILL NEGOTIATE WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 11 STATE 101527

ALL OF ITS NEIGHBORS, INCLUDING LEBANON, ON THE BASIS OF RESOLUTION 242 AND BOUTROS HAS STATED THAT LEBANON WOULD BE BOUND TO NEGOTIATE WITH ISRAEL, IF IT DOES NEGOTIATE, ON THE BASIS OF 425, WHAT IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW IS THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THESE TWO RESOLUTIONS?

A. --THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FULLY SUPPORTS BOTH OF THESE RESOLUTIONS WHICH DEAL WITH DIFFERENT SITUATIONS. THERE IS NO LINKAGE.

CHRISTOPHER

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